

Greens MLA Johnathan Davis investigated over teen sex allegations

 canberratimes.com.au/story/8418682/greens-mla-investigated-over-teen-sex-allegations

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9 November 2023

■ WATCH: ACT Greens leader Shane Rattenbury makes a statement regarding serious allegations raised against Greens MLA Johnathan Davis. The ACT Greens have referred to police serious allegations government member Johnathan Davis had sex with an underage boy and with a teenager.

Mr Davis, the party's member for Brindabella in the Legislative Assembly, is expected to resign.

The party is investigating allegations Mr Davis, 31, separately engaged in a relationship with a 17-year-old boy and had sex with a 15-year-old boy.

A complaint about Mr Davis' alleged sex with the 15-year-old was brought to the attention of Greens Leader Shane Rattenbury on Monday.

Mr Rattenbury then immediately commissioned an internal party investigation into the allegations which, if proven in court, would amount to criminal behaviour.

Mr Rattenbury confirmed a complaint was brought to his attention at the start of the week, and a second followed shortly afterwards.



 The ACT Greens' Johnathan Davis, pictured at the Legislative Assembly in October. Picture by Elesa Kurtz

"I immediately asked a member of my senior staff to do an initial review to establish the appropriate next steps, and I have stood Mr Davis down from his MLA duties indefinitely," Mr Rattenbury said in a statement.

"My office has not seen evidence of illegal activity, but we are reporting what we know of the complaints to police."

A person found guilty in the ACT of having sexual intercourse with a young person aged under 16 faces a jail term of up to 14 years.

The Canberra Times understands the young person did not provide evidence and has not come forward, which prompted the other person, who was 17 at the time of the alleged relationship with Mr Davis, to provide information.

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Mr Davis has been accused of having a relationship with the 17-year-old two years ago, while he was a member of the Legislative Assembly.

The party has been provided with screenshots of text message conversations between Mr Davis and the 17-year-old, in which the pair discuss "hooking up" multiple times and the 17-year-old's age.

Mr Davis said in the messages while some might see the relationship as inappropriate, he did not. The messages, seen by *The Canberra Times*, show Mr Davis confirming he had only met the person after they had turned 16.

A relationship with a 17-year-old is not illegal, as the law allows a person of that age to consent, but is understood to be inconsistent with the party's expectations for a member of government.

The ACT Greens on Friday held an emergency party room meeting to discuss the allegations and it is understood senior party figures have encouraged Mr Davis to resign.

Mr Davis, who is openly gay, was elected to the fifth Brindabella seat at the 2020 ACT election by a margin of 82 votes.



ACT Greens Leader Shane Rattenbury, right, with Mr Davis at the Legislative Assembly in October 2020. Picture by Sitthixay Ditthavong
Mr Davis had run for the Greens at the 2012 and 2016 ACT elections and stood for the federal seat of Bean in 2019. Mr Davis became involved in politics after campaigning, aged 15, against the planned closure of Kambah High School in 2006 and joined the Greens in 2008.

In his inaugural speech to the Assembly, Mr Davis described himself as a loud guy who wore his heart on his sleeve.

"I am someone who, in my lifetime, has found myself homeless, and I know what it feels like to have experienced sexual assault. There is a lot more to me, and indeed to any one of us, than we often give each other credit for. I am the sum of my diverse experiences, and those experiences inform my values," he said.

Mr Davis, a former real estate agent, has led the ACT Greens' push for a rent freeze, short-stay rental accommodation regulation and a voting age lowered to 16.

A recent internal party assessment of candidates for the 2024 territory election found Mr Davis was suitable to run for the Greens.